RDC awards inaugural micro-grants

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Thirteen businesses have received awards of up to $2,500 from the Regional Development Corporation's (RDC) Micro-Grant fund. The fund is part of the organization's business retention and expansion program that provides small businesses, regional startups, and tribal communities funding opportunities and one-on-one technical assistance to help build and sustain a vibrant local economy. The RDC will also provide technical assistance to all applicants. Awardees include Cloud Nine Trails in Rowe (shown above), which offers horseback trail rides through the Santa Fe National Forest and Pecos Wilderness. The full list of recipients is here.

Director updates community on Laboratory plans

Thom Mason, director of the Laboratory, gave educators, business people and community leaders an update on the Laboratory at a community event on March 4 at Buffalo Thunder Resort. He outlined that sustained growth is predicted, with the Lab's budget for 2020 reaching nearly $3 billion. Infrastructure improvements currently underway to cater for the growth include the first of two new parking facilities, a weather enclosure at the Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test (DARHT) facility, and a new office building. Higher budgets and new projects have also increased hiring needs, with 1,250 new employees added last year and a similar amount predicted for this year. Mason underlined the importance of partnerships with the community, pointing to collaborations with local colleges that are helping to fill the need for skilled workers at the Laboratory. Since hiring is an issue that extends beyond the Lab, the event included conversations among attendees on how to tackle recruiting issues across the region, with Lab managers at each table facilitating the discussions.